

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

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SS-20 USIA-15 JUSE-00 SY-10 USSS-00 DRC-01 /100 W

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2713

INFO AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, GR

SUBJECT: SUPREME COURT RESERVES DECISION RE APPEAL OF
BSO TERRORISTS

1. HEARING HELD MARCH 9 BEFORE PENAL SECTION GREEK SUPREME COURT (AREIOS PAGOS) RE APPEAL FILED EARLY FEBRUARY ON BEHALF TWO BLACK SEPTEMBER (BSO) TERRORISTS PREVIOUSLY SENTENCED TO DEATH BY ATHENS CRIMINAL COURT (ATHENS-555) FOR ACTS RELATED TO AUGUST 5, 1973 MASSACRE ATHENS AIRPORT. DEFENSE ATTORNEYS DID NOT APPEAR AT MARCH 9 HEARING AND PROSECUTION RECOMMENDED TO COURT THAT APPEAL PETITION FOR RETRIAL BE REJECTED. COURT DID NOT RULE IMMEDIATELY ON PROSECUTION RECOMMENDATION BUT CHOSE RESERVE ANNOUNCEMENT ITS DECISION FOR TIME BEING.

2. ENGLISH-LANGUAGE ATHENS NEWS AND ATHENS MIRROR REPORTED IN THEIR COVERAGE OF MARCH 9 HEARING THAT SUPREME COURT HAD REJECTED THE BSO TERRORISTS APPEAL FOR RETRIAL AND THAT THIS OPENED WAY FOR GOG TO ASK MILITARY JUSTICE COMMITTEE ON PARDONS TO COMMUTE DEATH SENTENCES TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT AS PRELIMINARY STEP TOWARDS EXPELLING TERRORISTS FROM GREECE. WHILE GREEK PAPERS MORE PRECISE IN REPORTING STORY -- NOTED THAT COURT HAS "RESERVED ANNOUNCEMENT ITS DECISION" -- THEY STATED THEIR EXPECTATION THAT APPEAL WILL BE REJECTED BY SUPREME

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COURT AFTER WHICH COUNCIL OF PARDONS PROCEDURE WOULD BE

SET IN MOTION. MARCH 10 AKROPOLIS AND TO VIMA AND
MARCH 11 ESTIA REMINDED READERS OF JANUARY 26 STATEMENT
FOREIGN MINISTER TETENES (ATHENS-0575) TO EFFECT THAT
"GOVERNMENT WOULD FURTHER HANDLE THE QUESTION (I.E. OF
BSO TERRORISTS) IN APPROPRIATE MANNER AFTER COMPLETION OF
ALL LEGAL PROCEDURES HAVE BEEN COMPLETED."
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